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Saints and Signs

A Semiotic Reading of Conversion in Early Modern Catholicism

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About this Title

Saints and Signs analyzes a corpus of hagiographies, paintings, and other materials related to four of the most prominent saints of early modern Catholicism: Ignatius of Loyola, Philip Neri, Francis Xavier, and Therese of Avila.

Verbal and visual documents – produced between the end of the Council of Trent (1563) and the beginning of the pontificate of Urban VIII (1623) – are placed in their historical context and analyzed through semiotics – the discipline that studies signification and communication – in order to answer the following questions: How did these four saints become signs of the renewal of Catholic spirituality after the Reformation? How did their verbal and visual representations promote new Catholic models of religious conversion? How did this huge effort of spiritual propaganda change the modern idea of communication?

The book is divided into four sections, focusing on the four saints and on the particular topics related to their hagiologic identity: early modern theological debates on grace (Ignatius of Loyola); cultural contaminations between Catholic internal and external missions (Philip Neri); the Christian identity in relation to non-Christian territories (Francis Xavier); the status of women in early modern Catholicism (Therese of Avila).

Subjects

History > Cultural History

Linguistics, Communications > History, Philosophy, Semiotics > Semiotics

Linguistics, Communications > Communications > Semiotics and Communication

Theology, Judaism, Religion > Early Modern Times > Monographs and Essay Collections

Theology, Judaism, Religion > Religion > European and American History of Religions (Middle Ages through Modern Times)

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Academics, Institutes, Libraries

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Table of Contents.

Table of Contents.....	vii
Acknowledgments.....	ix
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. The historical and cultural period: why starting from the Council of Trent?	2
1.2. The historical and cultural period: why ending in 1622?	8
1.3. In synthesis: 1563-1622.....	16
1.4. The method: why semiotics?.....	16
1.5. The corpus: what texts?.....	19
2. Ignatius of Loyola as a sign: religious conversion between divine grace and human will.....	25
2.1. Ignatius as a convert: the making of a narrative simulacrum... ..	27
2.2. Ignatius as a converter: the making of a narrative model.	108
2.3. Ignatius as a hero: from hagiography to epic.....	173
3. Philip Neri as a sign: religious conversion between internal and external missions.	211
3.1. Some biographical remarks.....	212
3.2. Antonio Gallonio's biography of Philip: historical and semiotic features.....	217
3.3. Pietro Giacomo Bacci's biography of Philip: historical and semiotic features.....	274
3.4. Philip's iconography: historical and semiotic features.....	289
4. Francis Xavier as a sign: conversion between sameness and otherness.	328
4.1. A structural definition of "religious mission"	329
4.2. Francis Xavier's biography between history and legend.	333
4.3. Francis Xavier's missionary life: a synthesis	334
4.4. Francis Xavier's documents: history and semiotics.	338
4.5. The Eurasian fabrication of Francis Xavier's hagiological identity: Orazio Torsellini's <i>Life</i>	375
4.6. The Portuguese fabrication of Francis Xavier's hagiological identity: Joam de Lucena's <i>Life</i>	398
4.7. Hagiographic poems about Francis Xavier.....	404

4.8. The depiction of a narrative model: images of Francis Xavier's missionary identity.....	412
5. Therese of Avila as a sign: religious conversion between the cloister and the world.....	493
5.1. The Jewish background of Therese of Avila.....	494
5.2. Sanctity and spiritual change in the <i>Libro de la vida</i>	501
5.3. The language of sanctity in Therese's early biographies.....	519
5.4. A hagiographic poem devoted to Therese.....	534
5.5. Images of Therese's hagiological identity.....	538
6. Conclusions.....	546
Bibliography.....	552
Abbreviations.....	552
Primary Sources.....	554
Secondary Literature.....	566
Catalogues of Exhibitions.....	599
List of illustrations.....	600
Introduction: illustrations.....	600
Ignatius as a sign: illustrations.....	600
Philip as a sign: illustrations.....	606
Francis Xavier as a sign: illustrations.....	608
Therese of Avila as a sign: illustrations.....	613
Index of names.....	614
Index of texts.....	642
Index of topics.....	652
Color illustrations.....	690